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14 VIETS

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Saigon 4559
8-31-67

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-03 SC-01 RSC-01 USIA-12 H-02 NSC-10 NSAE-00 L-03 INR-07 P-
CIA-04 DOD-01 SP-02 SS-35 SAM-03 SAL-01 PSR-01 AID-30 IO-21
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Lyons DATE 12/23/81
RDS ☐ or XGDS ☐ DATE
TS AUTH
ENDS
DECL
RELEASE
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

R 311125Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5777
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4020
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2345
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 846

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4559

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REFS: A. SAIGON 4366 B. SAIGON 4456

1. IT NOW APPEARS THAT COMMUNIQUE OF UPPER HOUSE CANDIDATES DENOUNCING GVN INTERFERENCE IN UPPER HOUSE ELECTION WILL NOT BE ISSUED BEFORE ELECTION, WHETHER OR NOT IT IS ISSUED AFTER SEPT 3, AND ICYWHAT FORM, WILL PROBABLY DEPEND ON PROPRIETY OF ELECTION AS JUDGED BY LOSERS.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, CANDIDATES NGUYEN TUONG BA AND NGUYEN HUU CHI (WHO IS MEMBER OF BA'S LIST) SAID THAT

THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN TASK OF ROUNDING UP SINGATURES FOR COMMUNIQUE. IT WAS APPARENTLY DRAFTED EVENING AUG 29 AND

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POLISHED IN FINAL FORM AUG 30. HOWEVER, BA AND CHI CLAIM THAT WORDING IS TOO STRONG FOR THEIR TASTE, AND THAT IN ANY CASE NOTHING WOULD BE GAINED BY ISSUING COMMUNIQUE ONLY TWO OR THREE DAYS BEFORE ELECTION. THEY BELIEVE THAT, WITH EFFORT ON MEIR PART, UP TO 40 SLATES COULD BE PERSUADED TO SIGN DOCUMENT, BUT THEY INTEND TO MAKE NO SUCH EFFORT.

3. DRAFT COMMUNIQUE NOTES THAT MEETING WAS CALLED AUG 29 (AT DIEN HONG HALL) TO "DETERMINE AN ATTITUDE" REGARDING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR SIX LISTS. HOWEVER, MEETING WAS DISRUPTED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SIX SLATES AND BY CIVIL SERVANTS AT DIEN HONG WHO SHUT OFF MICROPHONES AND ELECTRICITY. THEREFORE, SIGNERS OF COMMUNIQUE WOULD 1) "STRONGLY DENOUNCE"SUCH "SABOTAGE," WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE INTENTION OF GVN TO CONTROL THE ELECTION; 2) "STRONGLY DENOUNCE GENERALS THIEU AND KY FOR HAVING CONTINUED TO HOLD POWER DURING ELECTION PERIOD, AND FOR USING PRESSURE AND OTHER MANS AVAILABEL TO GOVERNMENT TO INTERVENE IN ELECTION,

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THEREBY PLOTTING TO SET UP DICTATORIAL REGIME;" 3) PROMISE TO UNITE TO RESIST GOVERNMENT PRESSURE AND INSURE FREE AND FAIR ELECTION;

4) "CALL ON GROUPS WHICH LOVE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY TO JOIN WITH US IN THIS STRUGGLE;" 5) DENOUNCE "NEW PLOTS OF GOVERNMENT" SUCH AS CONFISCATING VOTERS CARDS WHICH WILL BE GIVEN TO GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS WHO WILL VOTE TWICE.

4. BA DISAGREED WITH WORDING OF SECOND AND FOURTH POINTS, WHICH HE FELT WOULD GIVE UNDUE ENCOURAGEMENT TO EXTREMIST ELEMENTS. BA CLAIMS TO BE UNOFFICIAL CHAIRMAN OF AN INFORMAL GROUP COMPOSES OF POLITICAL PARH
ES (CHU LUC VNQDD, TAN
DAI VIET, RDV, AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS (THIEU MINH, TRAN DU, HOANG QUYNH) WHO ARE KEEPING CLOSE EYE ON UPPER ELECTION. BA AND CHI SAY THAT THEY ARE FORCE FOR MODERATION IN THE GROUP. HOWEVER, IF ELECTION IS LESS THAN "RELATIVELY HONEST" IT WILL BE DIFFICULTO PREVENT EXTREMEIST ACTION. MAJOR

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GUIDLINE FOR DETERMINING RELATIVE HONESTY OF ELECTION WILL BE NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED SLATES (P#4, 5#8.3) AND 3RD WHICH ARE ELECTED. THEY ADMIT AHT HUYNH VAN NHIEM SLATE (3RD AUG) POSSIBLY SLATE OF NGUYEN GIA HIEN (8) COULD WIN ON THEIR OWN WITHOUT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT. HOWEVER, IF THREE OR MORE OF GOVERNMENT LISTS WIN, THEY BELIEVE ELECTION WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE BEEN UNFAIR. ACCORDING BA, IF THIS SHOULD HAPPEN, PROPOSED PROTEST ACTION, INCLUDING STREET DEMONSTRATIONS, ARE LIKELY.

5. BA INDICATED HIS BELIEF THAT GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY IN SUPPORT OF SIX SLATES HAS DECREASED SOMEWHAT SINCE PROTEST BEGAN. HOWEVER, HE AND CHI ARE CONVINCED THAT WRITTEN ORDER WAS SENT THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS TO PROVINCE CHIEFS INSTRUCTING THEM TO TURN OUT VOTE FOR THE SIX LISTS; THEY ARE EQUALLY CONVINCED THAT ORDER HAS NOT BEEN RESCINDED. CHI SUGGESTED THAT COLBY INTERVENE WITH GVN TO HAVE ORDER CANCELLED.

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6. COMMENT: BA AND CHI CLAIM THEY HAVE GOOD CHANCE TO WIN. HOWEVER, AS IN CASE OF MOST OTHER CANDIDATES, QUALIFICATION IS THAT ELECTION MUST BE "FREE AND FAIR." UNFORTUNATELY, IT APPEARS QUITE LIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE MANY POOR LOSERS AMONG 608 UNSUCCESSFUL UPPER HOUSE CANDIDATES, ENOUGH TO PRESENT PLAUSIBLE CHARGES OF ELECTION RIGGING. CHARGES WILL BE PARTICULARLY LOUD AND LONG IF SEVERAL LISTS BELIEVED SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT SHOULD WIN. WE HAVE THUS FAR SEEN HOUSE LISTS.
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